

HOCUS POCUS FOUND IN MUSIC WITHOUT INSTRUMENTAL DISGUISES

Latest Variety of Tone Juggling Is the Masquerading of Cheap Salon Music in Modern Harmonies and Distorted Melodic Sequences.

By W. J. HENDERSON.

WHEN the critics promulgate their opinions the musicians are enabled to chortle with delight. For when the critic solemnly asserts that the artist's art is not of importance the artist can properly reply that, no matter how small it may be, it cannot be as insignificant as the critic's criticism. Joseph Holbrooke, British composer, upon a time published a book called "Weird Opinions." In it he hit out right and left at conductors (those who did not conduct Holbrooke music, of course), managers, critics and other indescribable persons. Among other delightful anecdotes one especially notes on this one:

"I remember that Thomas Beecham had great trouble in finding a bass oboe for Delius, and at last they found a property instrument for him, used by a juggler or some such fellow on the stage, you know, but which emitted no sound! Of course the composer did not know whether the instrument was playing or not, so it passed off; and I later heard that some of the critics said the instrument had a quaint and soft tone! These poor critics are really the limit."

It looks to one of them as if at least part of the joke were on Frederick Delius. What on earth did Delius want of a bass oboe and what did he know about it? Where did he ever hear one that he should decide that only its particular quality of tone would meet his requirements? There has not been such a thing in modern orchestral music. It is almost a sure bet that Mr. Delius got all the information he ever had about the bass oboe from Marin Mersenne's "De Instrumentis Harmonicis," which dates from the first years of the seventeenth century.

The bass oboe was five feet long and of conical shape. Three of the eleven holes cut in the instrument were covered by a box a little above the centre. These covered holes were reached by keys which protruded from the box. So much one can learn from the picture in Mersenne's book. But who knows how a bass oboe sounds—and who cares? Richard Strauss had to have a heckelphone in "Salome." Now a heckelphone is not a machine for worrying public speakers, but a musical instrument. The heckelphone is simply a barytone oboe, pitched one octave lower than the treble oboe. When Dr. Strauss thrust it into the orchestra he declared that it opened "a new domain of expression," but common folk did not hear anything that could not have been produced with the use of the conventional oboe choir, namely, two oboes, English horn and two bassoons.

The plain fact is that there is a vast amount of hocus pocus in music, and most of it betrays itself in compositions which do not lend themselves to instrumental disguise. The latest variety of tone juggling is the masquerading of cheap salon music in modern harmonies and distorted melodic sequences. We have had to endure some hundreds of songs of this type ever since Hugo Wolf showed the vocal tradesmen how to do the trick.

Scrabble came over here and twittered all over the piano keyboards in tantalizing little lyrics which sounded like young ladies' boarding school pieces intoxicated on lemonade—in other words, saturated with unexpected "sour notes." And now we have to hear this sort of thing continually. It is not like the monstrosities of Leo Ornstein. It is polite, always perfectly, flawlessly, soporifically polite. The Ornstein stuff excites your wrath; this nonsense simply puts you to sleep. It is as soothing as the buzzing of flies on a window pane, and artistically just as important.

Why does not the Society of Pure Modernism hold its meetings in private? Percy and Ferdie (if there is not a Ferdie there ought to be) and Cyrie and Selie ought to assemble before their own altars. Their care could be observed there without confusion of the public mind. The sessions could be concluded with learned papers on the Stravinsky string quartet, the recrudescence of Eric Korngold, the seven avatars of Scriabin, the enchanted slumber of Emmanuel Moor and kindred topics dear to the far flung spirits of the fathomless future. Let them all rejoice and be exceedingly glad that the future is theirs. Let the rest of us be content in that commonplace musicians play old fashioned music by the "has been"—Schumann, Beethoven, Chopin and that lot.

The reopening of Steinway Hall brings with it a rush of memories. The name of this hall means nothing to the present generation of music lovers, and the names of most of those who revealed their art within its walls would mean quite as little. But in the history of New York music Steinway

Hall must always claim an honorable place. If historical reasons are unconvincing to some minds, then let it be recorded that this old auditorium has never been surpassed in acoustic quality. Everything from a piano recital to an orchestral concert sounded well there. What a pity that the town passed on its way northward! But now it is once more easy to reach Steinway Hall, and those who go will find themselves in a pleasant place.

It was in Steinway Hall that the Boston Symphony Orchestra was first heard when it made its initial visit to New York in the season of 1888-89. Its first number was the "Oberon" overture, and even now one can remember the splendid virility and richness of the body of strings, with Kneisel and Loeffler at the first desk and Adamowski and Roth at the second.

For years Theodor Thomas gave his most admirable concerts there, offering a series of programmes which present day conductors would do well to study. Of the army of solo performers and singers who entertained audiences in the old hall memory at random recalls such violinists as Wilhelmj and Wieniawski and Viouxtemps, the lamented pianist Josef (often a star in the Thomas concerts), Christine Nilsson, Lilli Lehmann, Franz Rummel, Scheurs, the clarinetist, Theodore Todt, Emma Juch, Emily Winant, Karl Kildworth (better as editor than interpreter), Camillo Urso, most impressive of women violinists; Carl Baermann, the piano mentor of Boston; Father Max Heinrich, the tragically fated Michael Bannor; Moritz Rosenthal, swiftest and Wittiest of pianists; and Mme. Emma Albani, who was heard there for the first time in this country in one of Anton Seidl's concerts.

The list might be indefinitely prolonged, but to no good end. It is enough to say now that every one will hope that a second record as brilliant as the first has been begun.

It will not at any time be the intention of the writer of this department to reply to letters to the editor containing strictures on his comments. But being human he cannot refrain from expressing his great gratification at the passionate epistle from the gentleman who took issue with him as to the comparative merits of the performances at Munich and the Metropolitan Opera House.

He confesses that the acquaintance of the writer of the letter with Munich is greater than his. He is even proud of it. But the music reviewer of this New York Herald has heard a sufficient number of Munich performances to be a competent judge of their typical standards and achievements. Well, the Germans still take themselves seriously and are still busily striving to Germanize the world for its own salvation. But the job has become appallingly difficult in spite of the eager help offered by some Americans, and it is no wonder that sometimes gentlemen from Munich grow impatient.

the first time on Saturday night, the cast including Elizabeth Amden and Miss Nina Hager, Messrs. Tommasini and Royer in the cast and Sylvia Tell heading the corps de ballet.

Mischa Violin, Russian violinist, will give a recital at Carnegie Hall this evening. He will play selections by Viouxtemps, Wagner-Wilhelmj, Godowsky, Bazzini and Saint-Saens.

On Josef Stopak's programme for his first violin recital of the season at Carnegie Hall on next Sunday afternoon will be the little played Eccles-Salmon sonata in G minor, a group from the Bach sonata in B minor for violin alone, the Sinding concerto in A major, and a closing group that will include the brilliant Wieniawski "Souvenir de Moscow."

Miss Katherine Bacon, pianist, who gave three recitals in Aeolian Hall last season, is to appear at this same hall in her first recital of the season on Monday evening, October 17. Her programme will include compositions by Mozart, Brahms, Chopin, Ravel, Albeniz, Arenski and Liszt.

When Von Telmányi, violinist, arrives in this country, he will bring a number of novelties. Among these will be the only violin concerto of Puccini-Busoni. Another of the new works will be a violin concerto by Ernst von Dohnányi, a countryman of Telmányi's, while modern Scandinavian musical endeavor will be represented by Carl Nielsen's violin concerto. A fourth novelty will be Telmányi's own violin concerto.

Walter Damrosch will commence activities for the season with the revival of his explanatory recitals at the piano

Opera and Concert Artists in This Week's Musical Events



MISS EDNA HAMPEL, CONTRALTO, IN RECITAL, AEOLIAN HALL



FRANCIS MOORE, PIANIST IN RECITAL, AEOLIAN HALL



MISS NINA HAGER, CONTRALTO IN RECITAL, AEOLIAN HALL



MME. ELEONORA DE CISNEROS, AS ORTRUD IN "LOHENGRIK," MANHATTAN OPERA HOUSE

on the Wagner-Nibelungen Trilogy, which begins with "Rheingold" next Sunday afternoon in Aeolian Hall. The New York Symphony Orchestra will open its New York season with a pair of concerts in Carnegie Hall Thursday afternoon and Friday evening, October 20 and 21, with Paul Kochanski, Polish violinist, as soloist. Mr. Damrosch has selected for first performance in America a new work by Roger-Ducasse, entitled "Marche Franciscaine." Mr. Dam-



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roech will conduct the first concert in the children's series in Aeolian Hall Saturday morning, October 22.

Josef Stransky, the Philharmonic conductor, announces the production of European novelties at the Philharmonic concerts during the season, but says that these will be outnumbered by the new works of American composers which he will offer. The presentation of Daniel Gregory Mason's prelude and fugue for piano and orchestra at the first Philharmonic concert of the season on Thursday evening, October 27, will introduce an American novelty. The conductor has chosen his symphony for that evening from the first programme of the Philharmonic Society at its initial concert—the Fifth of Beethoven.

Every number of the programme which John McCormack will offer at his concert in the Hippodrome next Sunday will be labelled "first time." Among the composers represented are Vaughan Williams, Haverhill Arian, Dr. John P. Larchet, Frank Bridge, Montague Phillips, Martin Shaw, Julius Harrison, Hamilton Harty and Herbert Hughes.

Miss Helena Marsh, contralto, who resigned from the Metropolitan Opera Company in order to devote herself to the concert field, will give a song recital at Aeolian Hall on the evening of October 21.

A feature of the recital of Miss Anna Case at Carnegie Hall October 19 will be the inclusion on the programme of a Spanish song by Miss Case herself. Miss Case wrote the music of this song without words several years ago, at the time when the tango was the most popular of dances. Recently she came to the conclusion that the music would be admirably suited to a song, and words have now been placed to it by Miss Cecile Cowdrey. Miss Case will give this song as the last number of her programme. Another item of the programme will be a group of old English, Italian, German and Swedish songs, most of which will be novelties to New York audiences.

Miss Hager, contralto, will give a recital at Aeolian Hall to-morrow afternoon.

On next Friday evening Edna Hampel, contralto, will sing a group of songs at Aeolian Hall, with Conrad V. Bos at the piano.

The Philadelphia Orchestra, under the direction of Leopold Stokowski, will give ten concerts at Carnegie Hall during the season on Tuesday evenings. The first concert, on October 18, will be without an assisting artist. At the second, November 1, Alfredo Casella, the Italian composer, conductor and pianist, will make his New York debut.

Mme. Elly Ney, pianist, who will make her first appearance in America on next Saturday afternoon, will confine her programme to the works of Beethoven.

Harold Hargreaves, an English barytone, will be heard in his first New York recital in Aeolian Hall on next Thursday evening.

The Beethoven Association, which is now in its third season, announces a

series of six subscription concerts at Aeolian Hall on the following dates: November 8, December 6, January 10, February 13, March 13, April 17, three Tuesday evenings and three Monday evenings. The proceeds of the concerts are devoted to some object of musical interest; the Krebhorn edition of Thayer's "Life of Beethoven," which has not hitherto been available in English, is about to be published with the first season's fund.

Vaudeville No Refuge for Failures, Says Singer

Miss Adele Rowland, prima donna, musical comedy and concert star, who will give a recital of songs at the Palace Theatre this week, insists that the two-day is the coming field for concert celebrities, instrumentalists and other high class artists for a part at least of their time.

"Vaudeville is not a refuge for failures on the recital platform," she said the other day. "There is no room in vaudeville for such people. Let it be heralded far and wide that only artists of genuine gifts and possessed of a knowledge of certain essentials can ever hope to succeed in this extremely difficult and highly specialized field. A vaudeville audience is more representative of all types than the average concert audience, but this does not imply that our vaudeville audience is not as thoroughly discriminating."

"The concert audience is self-conscious and critical and supposedly analytical. The vaudeville audience, a cross section of typical American life, is less decorous perhaps, but it is receptive, it is human, it is demonstrative to a Latin degree; it is particularly, it is so frank, perhaps brutally so—but so are European opera audiences. "Without going into any discussion as to the whyfores, the vaudeville audience is personal; the artists who fail to understand this intensely personal feeling must fail utterly. The vaudeville audience wants to hear about itself, its desires, its emotions, and the artist, let us assume she is a singer in this instance, must make the direct appeal by singing at her listeners and concerning them."

REMEMBER MISS SPONG.

Among numerous floral tributes which graced the lobby of the Punch and Judy Theatre on Monday night on the occasion of the first appearance of Miss Hilda Spong and her company in "The Fan" was a large fan composed mainly of varicolored roses. Attached to it was a card bearing the names of all the members of the company. To the ordinary theatregoer it doubtless appeared as a mere formal courtesy, but it impressed the well known theatrical persons who were present in a far different way.

As one veteran manager expressed it: "I've been in the theatrical game for over thirty years, but this is the first time that I've ever known of a company presenting to the star a floral token of esteem on the opening night."

The Society of the Friends of Music announces it will give a series of ten subscription concerts on Sunday afternoons at the Town Hall, beginning November 6, and one on Wednesday afternoon, February 1, at Carnegie Hall. The series will be under the direction of Arthur Bodanzky, and the list of assisting artists to appear includes Elena Gerhardt, Estelle Liebling, Harold Bauer and Carlos Salzedo.

Fidelity League to Give Concerts

The Actors Fidelity League will give a series of all star feature concerts in behalf of its building fund at Henry Miller's Theatre during the season. There will be one each month, the first to be given on Sunday evening, October 23.

E. F. Baldwin Opens Lakewood Cottage

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD. LAKESIDE, Oct. 8.—School openings this week brought to Lakewood a large number of boys and girls and with them their parents. The Arden School for Girls is this year in a new home, the school having purchased the Rockefeller cottage in Lake Drive, the former residence of Prof. and Mrs. Strong, the latter the daughter of Mr. John D. Rockefeller. The Newman School for Boys also has opened.

Mr. and Mrs. Elbert F. Baldwin and family are occupying their house in Lake Drive and Mr. and Mrs. J. Frank Shanley also are in their home. From Southampton came the Samuel T. Skidmore family to their cottage. Mr. Sherwood B. Ferris and the Misses Ferris are also back.

The Association of National Advertisers, which made the Laurel House the scene of its annual convention and frolic last year, are returning for their 1921 programme of business and recreation, opening November 14. Among the sporting features will be a golf tournament at the Country Club and a shoot at the traps of the Laurel House Gun Club. Mr. and Mrs. Roy Carruthers of the Waldorf-Astoria, New York, are at the Laurel House. On Wednesday Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Riley and their two little daughters arrived from their Greenwich house. Mrs. Pierre L. Losier and Miss Losier and Mrs. J. O'Neill of New York also are there. Others at the hotel include Mr. and Mrs. Gottfried Krueger, Newark; Dr. and Mrs. G. T. Moore, New Harbor; Mr. H. De Witt Dobbs, Mr. and Mrs. C. W. See and Mrs. M. L. Epes, Kingston, N. Y.; Mr. Guy H. Humphreys, Mrs. F. Hutchings and Miss G. M. Creamer, New York; Mr. Arthur P. Baugh and the Misses Polly and Nina Baugh, Philadelphia; Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Donnelly, Boston; Mrs. H. C. Hood and the Misses Helen and Peggy Hood of Palm Beach.



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